

Remarks

Claims 1-18 are pending in the application following entry of this Preliminary Amendment. Claims 1, 3-5, and 7-9 have been amended for the purpose of placing the claims in a condition appropriate for prosecution before the USPTO. Claims 10-18 have been added. Claims 1, 3, and 6 are the only independent claims pending.

No new matter is added by the amendments made herein. Claims 1-9 are supported by their text as originally filed with this application during the international stage. Claim 10 merely adds the formerly "optional" element recited in claim 7 as a dependent claim. Claims 11-14 (which depend from independent claim 3) and claims 15-18 (which depend from independent claim 6) merely repeat claims 7-10 (which depend from independent claim 1) for the purpose of removing the former multiple dependency of claims 7 and 9 as originally filed with this application during the international stage.

Summary

The Applicants respectfully contends that each of claims 1-18 is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance at the earliest possible time.

Respectfully submitted,

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